DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 146 145 SP 011 801

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TITLE A Personalized Competency Referenced Model of Teacher Education.
PUB DATE 77
NOTE 20p.

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Educational Objectives; Educational Philosophy; *Individualized Instruction; Individualized Programs; *Inservice Teacher Education; Needs Assessment; *Performance Based Teacher Education; Personal Values; Program Content; *Program Descriptions; Self Evaluation; Teacher Education; *Teaching Models

ABSTRACT

This paper presents an individualized model that assists inservice and preservice educators in attaining their professional goals in a continuing program of self-improvement. This model provides a structure that creates a theoretical framework that lends continuity to individual programs. It also presents a methodology of identifying individual needs and mastering competencies to fulfill objectives based on these needs. An underlying assumption of this model is that an organized approach to the continuing development of professional competencies will, in the long run, produce more effective teaching as evidenced by increased student gain. (Author)

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A PERSONALIZED COMPETENCY REFERENCED MODEL OF TEACHER EDUCATION

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A PERSONALIZED COMPETENCY REFERENCED MODEL OF TEACHER EDUCATION

A facet of teacher education that has been receiving increased attention is inservice training. Efforts are being directed toward the continued education of entire school faculties in an attempt at comprehensive school renewal. There are a number of approaches to designing inservice programs for teachers. One such program is based on a competency referenced model that demands educators look closely at their own individual situations.

This personalized competency referenced education model incorporates many of the features of competency based teacher education in an individualized, personalized and flexible manner. The model is individualized and personalized through self-paced learning and self-determined competencies. In this model each participant works toward personal objectives and competencies which are referenced to the individual's philosophy of education. Moreover the model is flexible since it can function in preservice and inservice programs and is adaptable to various situations and demands.

The model consists of five phases: Philosophy, Rationale, Objectives, Mastery of Competencies and Evaluation. A collaborative section consisting of influencing factors provides an overall guide to the use of these phases.

COLLABORATIVE SECTION

The collaborative section is comprehensive and affects all five phases. This section deals with the influences that must be considered in determining a philosophy and in choosing competencies, objectives, etc. A participant in the model must function within a school district, with students and parents. He may need to fulfill certification requirements, be satisfied with himself, etc. Participants cannot be independent or ignorant of various influencing factors but must recognize and deal with them in a collaborative manner that facilitates growth for all concerned parties. Participants in this model need to familiarize themselves with the various influencing factors which they deem appropriate and operate accordingly.

After recognizing the influencing factors and dealing with them in a collaborative manner so that all appropriate factors are considered at least to some degree, the participant is prepared to enter the phases of the model denoted by the acronym PROME. Entry into a particular phase of the model is determined through self-evaluation. There is no one phase at which everybody starts. Depending on personal needs and development, participants will start at different phases and procede in different sequences. Self-evaluation is a central and continuing component that indicates one's position in the model and the degree of professional development. Diagnostic instruments and the program advisor provide assistance in self-evaluation. (See Diagram A.)

A PERSONALIZED
COMPETENCY REFERENCED MODEL
OF TEACHER EDUCATION

Collaboration

Influencing Factors: Systems, Student Needs, District Objectives, Community Goals, Employment Potential, Certification, Professional Organizations, etc.

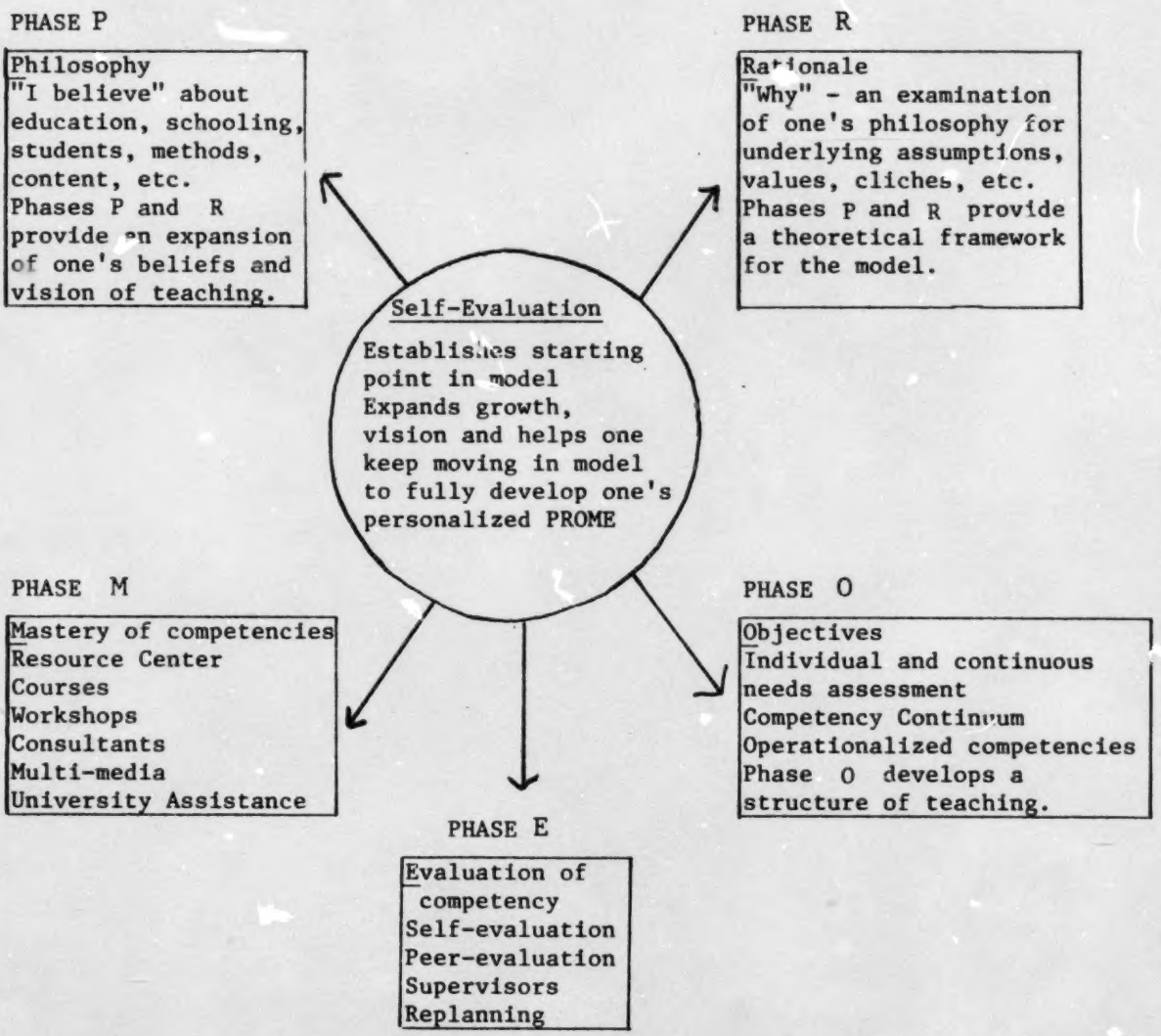

DIAGRAM A

PHASE P: PHILOSOPHY

Phase "P" of this teacher education model is the philosophy phase. (In the implementation of the model it is not necessary to follow this order of presentation. Also, the five phases are not mutually exclusive but overlap.) In this phase each participant is asked to think seriously about education. This phase does not include just an historical approach to the philosophy of education but what each individual participant personally believes about various facets of education. One way in which the beliefs are determined is by "I believe" statements. Thus participants outline what they believe about education, schooling, students, systems, methods, etc. Value clarification exercises, role playing and simulation games are some other methods utilized to help individuals discover and delineate their philosophy of education.

PHASE R: RATIONALE

Phase "R" of the model is the rationale. In this phase the question "why" is asked. As participants develop their philosophy they examine it to ascertain if they truly believe what they have stated and if their actions are consistent with their philosophy. Furthermore, it is important for the participants to explore their philosophical beliefs for underlying values, assumptions and cliches which the philosophy may contain. Subsequent to this exploration participants may find that they want to rethink their philosophy or that they have a satisfactory understanding of their beliefs and implications. It should also be noted that one's philosophy and rationale are not

considered to be static but developmental. Some of the same methods used in the philosophy phase are utilized in this phase including group process and conferences with an advisor to accomplish the examination of the philosophy.

Phases "P" and "R" compose the theoretical framework of the model. Although participants are apt to say, "don't bother me with theory I need to plan for tomorrow," they ask questions that indicate they want an understanding of why they should do something one way and not another. Educators are interested in guiding principles which is another way of saying theoretical framework. Sections "P" and "R" of this model provide guiding principles which are essential for effective teaching, provide a framework for perceiving needs, help expand one's vision of effective teaching and which are necessary for consistency and the effective use of this model.

PHASE O: OBJECTIVES

Phase "O" requires writing objectives that are referenced to the theoretical framework just established and to perceived needs. This phase then provides for an individual needs assessment referred to as the competency continuum. Participants, in light of their philosophy, rationale and objectives, individually examine their strengths and weaknesses and determine what they need to know, be able to do, and to what degree. Next, participants write operationalized competencies (based on the needs assessment) which they will master in order to fulfill the desired objectives. (See the appendix for a description of the process of writing objectives, the needs assessment and writing competencies.)

PHASE M: MASTERY OF COMPETENCIES

After determining the competencies to be mastered, phase "M" allows participants to determine possible resources to use in mastering these competencies. In this phase the university is important in providing courses, personnel, workshops, materials, multi-media aids, etc. In addition to university services, it is helpful to have resource centers in which participants have access to many kinds of materials and equipment to help them in mastering their competencies. The resource centers provide environments conducive to the methods of individualized and self-directed learning. One resource center may also become a teacher center, a meeting place to exchange ideas and to develop new ones. In general the resource centers are informal environments replete with materials, books, media and any other kind of resource that is beneficial in helping participants improve their competencies.

PHASE E: EVALUATION

Phase "E" is the evaluation phase which helps the participants determine if they have mastered their competencies. No one method of evaluation or measurement is recommended but rather a variety of methods are made available. However, the emphasis is on self-evaluation as the primary means of competency evaluation. Various self-evaluation tools are listed in order to help participants determine the degree to which they have mastered their competencies.

ADVISING

In order to implement this model an advising system is used that assigns an advisor to each participant. The advisor is a member of the Teacher Corps Program who helps the participant work through the model. The advisor also provides a link between the Teacher Corps Program, Saint Louis University and the participant. The advisory process and this model together accomplish the following goals:

A. Provide a continuous needs assessment that assists in program development

B. Develop a closer, more personal link between the participant and Teacher Corps

C. Develop for the participants a comprehensive professional portfolio for varied uses

The portfolio mentioned in "C" above is developed by the participant in conjunction with the advisor It consists primarily of a folder containing forms that are used in developing the phases of the model. These forms are completed by the participants with the advisor's assistance if desired. (This folder is the participant's property.) In addition to the helpfulness in developing the phases, using the folder integrates the many components of the program and provides a personalized theme around which the Teacher Corps Program develops.

GOAL AND DESIGN

This teacher education model is designed to assist participants in becoming fully mature educators. The design encompasses a method that produces individual personal growth. A fully mature educator is defined here as one who develops all the phases of the model -- philosophy,

rationale, objectives, mastery and evaluation. The self-evaluation component helps one keep moving around the circle (PROME) and assists in one's professional growth.

This model is one part of a comprehensive school renewal effort. In order for this model to be effective in a school renewal program it must be used in conjunction with other efforts.

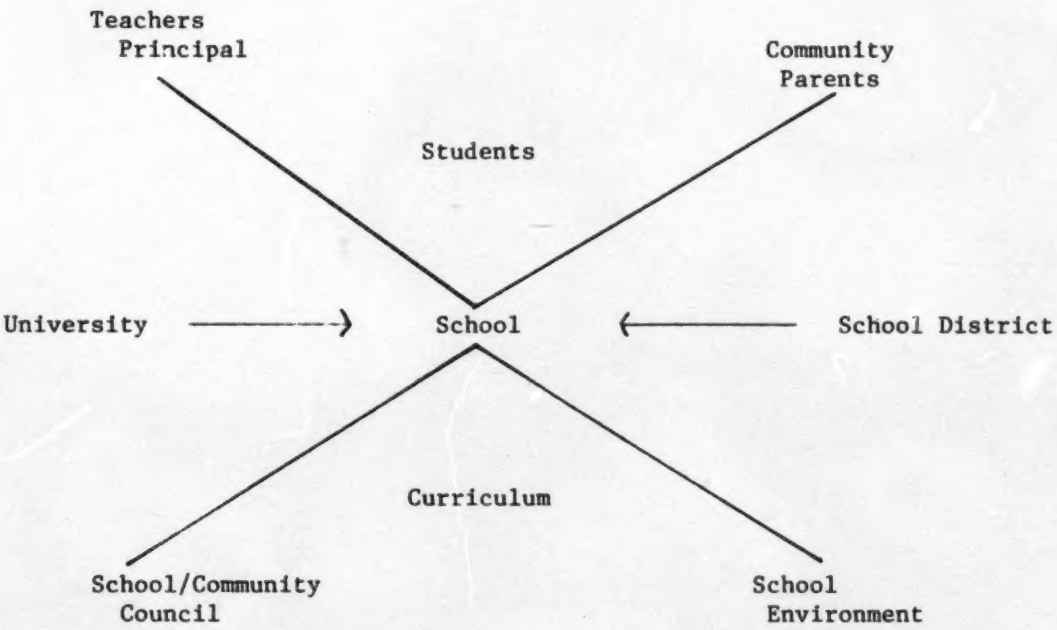

DIAGRAM B

This model of teacher education is used only for the teacher - principal component. Additional strategies must be developed and used with the other components listed in Diagram B . The above design establishes a collaborative and helping model that structurally and ecologically creates an environment conducive to professional growth for all participants.

SUMMARY

This paper presents an individualized model that assists inservice and preservice educators in attaining their professional goals in a continuing program of self-improvement. This model provides a structure that creates a theoretical framework which lends continuity to individual programs. It also presents a methodology of identifying individual needs and mastering competencies to fulfill objectives based on these needs. An underlying assumption of this model is that an organized approach to the continuing development of professional competencies will, in the long run, produce more effective teaching as evidenced by increased student gain.

APPENDIX

The following is an explanation and examples of three phases: Objectives, Mastery of Competencies and Evaluation. This explanation includes objective-writing, individual needs assessment, composing operationalized competencies, mastering competencies and evaluation.

Diagram C outlines seven sections. The first five sections concern phase "O" of the model (objectives). The sixth section pertains to phase "M" (mastery of competencies) . The seventh section concerns phase "E" (evaluation of competencies).

Section one of the diagram, general competency areas, contains three general areas of competencies categorized by a structure of teaching--planning, execution and evaluation. These general areas serve as categories in which the specific competencies are placed. This categorization provides organization, a definition of teaching by its structure and a braod base for competencies. However, many competencies do not fit discretely into the categories but overlap.

Section two contains possible topics around which objectives can be written and some sample objectives. These objectives are determined by the participants based on their theoretical framework (philosophy and rationale) developed in the philosophy and rationale phases, and are dependent on their needs and interests. Thus an individualized program is developed which promotes uniqueness among participants rather than sameness.

Once a general objective is written the participant conducts an individual needs assessment designated in section three. A competency continuum is constructed by the participant on which he notes his current position relative to the objective along with his desired position, i.e., where he would like to be. An assumption of this model is that there is no one correct way for everyone to perform a certain skill, but that one can improve skills or learn new ones in order to meet teacher and student needs more fully. The continuum then provides a way of indicating movement and tracking progress toward improved skills and competencies. If instruments are needed to help a participant obtain an accurate picture of where he is on the continuum, section four provides some possibilities.

Section five requires the writing of specific and operationalized competencies based on the objectives and the desired movement on the continuum. This section indicates specifically what the participant will accomplish and when he will have accomplished it. It is important to note that these competencies are individualized and personalized competencies. They are chosen by the participant and are based on self-selected objectives which are arrived at from individual needs and which are consistent with the theoretical framework established in phases "P" nad "R".

Section six leads into phase "M" of the model -- mastering the competencies. This section suggests various resources to help in this activity. No one resource is considered ideal for all participants but rather various resources are mentioned from which the educator can choose the one or ones that best fit his schedule and learning style.

Section seven of the diagram is evaluation. This section will enable the participant to determine progress in mastering the competencies. Again various evaluation instruments are indicated from which the participant can choose the one or ones that best fit his needs.

PHASE O 1. General Competency Area	2. Possible topics for Objectives	3. Individual Needs Assessment (Competency Continuum) X=Where I am O= Where I want to be	DIAGRAM C 4. Assessment Instruments to Determine Where I Am	5. Operationalized Competencies	PHASE M 6. Some Potential Resources	PHASE E 7. Resources for Evaluation
STRUCTURE OF TEACHING 1. Plan	(sample topics) Classroom management Creative thinking Lateral thinking Materials Media Textbooks Subject matter Lesson Planning* Sample Objective for Lesson Planning To develop my lesson plans so my classes are more spontaneous	Some planning / O/ / X/ / No planning — All of class planned no deviation Continua are constructed by the participant including the various designations. No one designation is correct for all educators. Rather a participant should be able to move along the continuum as the situation warrants and to determine which position is best at a particular time.	Record of lesson plans ✓ Class response ✓ Self-evaluation ✓ Audio and/or video tapes Observer Other I will use the above checked items to help me determine where I am on the continuum.	(The competency is constructed by the participant.) My classes are too structured and do not allow for spontenaity or student initiative. Therefore I wish to allow more freedom in my classes by creating less structured lesson plans that allow for sponteneity. I will consult various books on planning and will visit other teachers who have classes that are planned but also spontaneous. I will have mastered this competency when I judge from my lesson plans and from student response that my classes are more spontaneous 80% of the time.	Method books ✓ Personnel Courses Workshops Supervisors Video tapes Other teachers Other The checked items are the ones I used to help me master the competency. Phases O and E are developed individually by participants. In order to assist them, a list is available that contains competency clusters. These are suggested competencies. Examples of learner results indicators are also included. See list for complete details.	Record of lesson plans ✓ Class response ✓ Audio and/or video tapes Observer Other - I did a post test to determine if I had moved on the continuum.

PHASE O 1. General Competency Area	2. Possible Topics for Objectives	3. Individual Needs Assessment (Competency Continuum) X=Where I am O=Where I want to be	4. Assessment Instruments to Determine Where I Am	5. Operationalized Competencies	PHASE M 6. Some Potential Resources	PHASE E 7. Resources for Evaluation
STRUCTURE OF TEACHING **II. Execute**	(sample topics) Lecturing Decision making Human relations Student responsibility Verbal communication Non-verbal communication Discipline Questioning Sample Objective for Questioning: To be able to ask different levels of questions.	/ X/ Comprehension / / O/ Factual questions — Synthesis	Audio/video tapes ✓ Observer Student response ✓ Student tests Self-evaluation Other	In an appropriate class I will be able to ask questions that not only require factual responses from the students, but also questions that require analysis and synthesis. I will consider this competency mastered when I can obtain synthesis and analysis as well as factual responses when I deem it appropriate.	Bloom, Taxonomy of Educational Objectives Courses Workshops Sanders, Classroom Questions ✓ Audio tapes ✓ Observers Other	Observer Audio tapes ✓ Student response ✓ Student tests ✓ Self-evaluation Check lists Other

PHASE O 1. General Competency Area	2. Possible Topics for Objectives	3. Individual Needs Assessment (Competency Continuum) X=Where I am O=Where I want to be	4. Assessment Instruments to Determine Where I Am	5. Operationalized Competencies	PHASE M 6. Some Potential Resources	PHASE E 7. Resources for Evaluation
STRUCTURE OF TEACHING III. Evaluate	(sample topics) Measurement Standardized tests Classroom testing Writing goals and objectives Revision of plans Student input Grading Record keeping Contract grading Sample Objective for Contract Grading To explore the possibilities of contract grading and to implement one.	No know-ledge of contract grading / Pilot study / X/ / / O/ / Know-ledge and implemen-tation	Self-evaluation Test ✓ Other	I will familiarize myself with the methods of contract grading through books, journals and a visit with a teacher who uses contract grading. I will try the method with two or three students and if successful continue the program with additional students each term until I have fully implemented the program.	Books ✓ Journals ✓ Personnel Multimedia aids Visitations ✓ Other	Student reaction ✓ Student performance Self-evaluation ✓ and satisfaction